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the ACTivist

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ACT for Disarmament Coalition

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Disarm the Seas

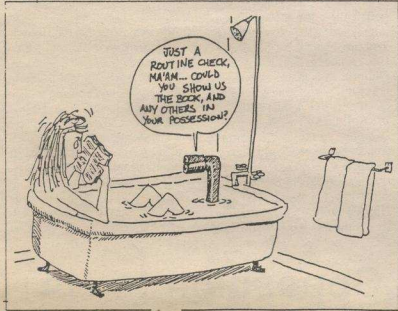


ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER SUMMIT...Sunday in Moscow the leaders of the two superpowers will hold another of their "fireside chats" under the glare of the TV cameras. Hopes are running high for a treaty reducing long-range ICBM missiles after last year's INF treaty.

(In the alphabet soup of arms control, ICBM means intercontinental ballistic missile - one capable of hitting the territory of one superpower from its base in the territory of the other. INF means intermediate-range nuclear forces - medium-range missiles like the cruise and SS-20 based in Europe, with a few in Asia.)

Nato policy during this apparent flurry of arms reduction has been to compensate for the loss of land-based missiles by sharply building up its sea-based and air-based nuclear forces. Warsaw Pact officials don't often make public statements, but their policy is likely similar.

At a recent conference in the Philippines, international activists with the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific network proposed a global "Triple Zero" option for arms reduction, with sea-based missiles to join land-based INF and ICBM missiles. None of the nuclear states at sea (the United States, Soviet Union, France, Britain and soon to include Canada) has shown



more than a token interest in reducing their naval weapons.

What we would like to see - what the world needs - are nuclear free seas. The seas bristle with weapons, from American Trident submarines to Soviet bases in the Arctic Kola peninsula to French nuclear test explosions in the South Pacific. Soviet submarines (out of sight, thus out of mind) lurk just off the American coast. By far the largest part of the US nuclear arsenal is at sea, and American warships are constantly entering international and Canadian ports.

A few examples of the accelerating naval arms race:

•Britain plans to buy US Trident submarines which will

increase British nukes from 128 warheads to up to 512

•The United States is deploying nearly 5000 Trident warheads by the year 2000 in the Pacific and Atlantic, along with 4000 sea-launched (or both subs and surface warships) cruise missiles

•The Soviet Union is developing and deploying sea-launched cruise missiles and a Trident equivalent, the Typhoon - All 4 nuclear sea-powers have military facilities overseas. The US operates facilities in 41 countries, the USSR in 11, Britain in 12 and France in 9

•The Indian Ocean is ringed with US, Soviet and French military bases. The indigenous Iwa people have been deported from the island of Diego Garcia to make way for a nuclear

weapons storage facility
•The Pacific is equally militarized, despite a South Pacific nuclear-free zone. US and Soviet missile test flights are common. Hawaii and Guam are US nuclear weapons storage sites, with Japan, Australia, and the Philippines home to major US bases

•Nuclear test explosions on Bikini and Eniwetok Atolls in the Pacific forced the evacuation of the Longlap people from their contaminated island in 1985. French nuclear tests on Mururoa and Fangatua Atolls continue to contaminate the ocean.

It's time to disarm the seas. For the superpowers this would mean real dismantling of a large part of their nuclear forces. For France and Britain, it would mean surrendering nuclear-armed submarines which serve more to safeguard their colonies than as a means of defence. For Canada, it would mean ending our contributions to the arms race at sea (we provide havens for US warships and subs, especially in British Columbia, and take part in military manoeuvres like the RIMPAC exercises - see article this page). Further, it would mean not buying nuclear submarines (from France or Britain) to patrol the Arctic. A sacrifice most Canadians could live with.

May 22-28 is International Disarm the Seas week. Many groups, both in Canada and around the world, are organizing educational and protest events for this week.

In Toronto, on Saturday, May 28, there will be a march from the Centre Island ferry landing, at the foot of Bay St, starting at 1 pm and followed by the funeral of a missile at Harbourfront.

On May 24 a forum on nuclear submarines will be held at 7 pm at the Board of Education building, 155 College St. The forum will feature Bill Blaikie, NDP External Affairs critic.

This summer the guided missile frigate USS Antrim will visit Montreal (June 23-4), Windsor (June 30-July 5), Thunder Bay (July 25-8), Toronto (Aug 23-6) and Halifax (Aug 28-31).

Also during Disarm the Seas week, ACT Vancouver will be joining the Nanosee Conversion Campaign in a 24-hour vigil at the peace camp at Nanosee Bay, BC's underwater missile testing range.

Mr Beatty Goes to War

Nowhere has our government's insensitivity been so clear as in its continued use of one of the eight Hawaiian islands for naval bombardment.

While the island in use, Kaho'olawe, is uninhabited, it contains 544 known archaeological sites, including adze quarries and petroglyphs. The island provides one of the few remaining links to 1000 years of Hawaiian culture and heritage. In recognition of its historical, cultural, scientific and religious importance, the entire island of Kaho'olawe - located off Maui - was placed on the United States registry of historic sites.

Our government promotes us as a Pacific country, yet does not seem to fathom the difference between the image it is trying to create and its insensitivity in bombing Hawaii. This has caused and continues to cause problems.

In the summer of 1987 the University of Hawaii co-sponsored with the Canadian government a week of panels and activities promoting Canada as a Pacific nation. Gladys Brandt, chairperson of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents, opened "Festival Canada" with an appeal for the Canadian government to stop bombing Kaho'olawe, to the

Requests that our government stop using the island have come from the Hawaiian State Senate and Congress, from a Hawaiian federal senator, from the mayor and council of Maui, and numerous other citizens.

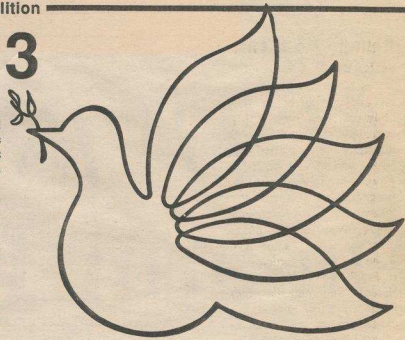
In 1986, 38 national and regional organizations in Canada and 24 prominent Canadians including Lois Wilson, the president of the World Council of Churches and Edward Scott, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada asked the government to stop the bombing. The Prime Minister did not even acknowledge the request.

visible embarrassment of Canadians present.

Will the government listen? If more of us let them know how we feel about this travesty, it has to.

Defence Minister Perrin Beatty has indicated that Canada will use Kaho'olawe for target practice in May of 1988 during RIMPAC military exercises. Urgent action is needed to register your disapproval. Write: PM Brian Mulroney, House of Commons, Ottawa K1A 0A6, with copies to Perrin Beatty, John Turner and Ed Broadbent By the South Pacific Peoples Foundation

In Action on April 23



ACT Toronto's sixth annual spring protest for peace last April 23 protested Canada's contributions to a more nuclear world while at the same time celebrating the peace activism that goes on 365 days a year.

For the first time in six years, there was hail, rain and very cold weather. Despite these conditions, hundreds came out to City Hall to dance at a free peace concert featuring Kensington Market's "global rock reggae" band Imagine. The feminist theatre group Company of Sirens performed many hilarious skits.

Stephen Dankowich's speech for ACT Toronto raised the issues of the day: opposition to the Tory plan to buy nuclear submarines for Canada, an end to the mining, transport and export of radioactive uranium and tritium for use in nuclear weapons, and a halt to cruise testing. Stephen also stressed ACT's

goal of strengthening the global non-aligned peace movement.

The crowd, now over 1500 peace activists, marched through downtown (mostly along Yonge St), led by groups like Kids for Peace and hundreds of high school

students, some with school peace groups and others alone or with friends. This year's protest was perhaps the youngest ever.

The march ended at Queen's Park with a rally focused on the twin themes of military intervention abroad and political repression of native peoples here in Canada.

Keynote speakers were Naji Ferah of the Canada Palestine Association and Joe Flexer of Jews for a Just Peace, who both called for a Palestinian homeland. ACT was making Toronto history by being the first peace group to give a platform at a major rally to the Palestinian speaker, Michelle Good of the Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with Native Peoples spoke next about attacks by the nuclear industry on native Canadians.

Other speakers highlighted superpower - both US and USSR - military intervention in regions like Central

America, Eritrea in the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan and East Timor.

The April 23 demonstration proved to be a major peace educational, with over 50,000 leaflets and 9000 posters distributed, mostly on street-corner leafletting days. It provided an opportunity to be together as peace activists, to share and renew our commitment. That, more than any numbers game, is what

made this year's protest a success.

Now we move on to other projects - Disarm the Seas May 28, the June 19 Day of Protest and Resistance (including a march and citizens' arrest of Reagan, Thatcher & co.) as part of the Popular Summit alternative to the Western leaders' economic summit, the June 5 Move-a-thon for the Environment.... Why not get involved yourself?

ACT Toronto Conference Sunday May 29

ACT Toronto's mini conference will be held May 29 at 12:30 pm, at a location to be announced. Future directions and projects of ACT for Disarmament's Toronto chapter will be discussed.

NDP Urged to Retain Opposition to NATO Stand

For the first time, there is a chance that the New Democratic Party will win the next election. Recent statements by PM Mulroney have shown that the Conservatives plan to make the NDP's policy of withdrawal from the NATO military alliance an election issue.

The following article is excerpted from an ACT for Disarmament-Toronto submission (written by historian John Bacher) to the New Democratic Party's International Affairs Committee concerning the steps an NDP government would take in withdrawing from NATO. Copies of the full document are available on request from ACT Toronto.

In expressing its position

on how Canada could help to shape a peaceful world, the NDP should base its initiatives on the memorandum *Giving Real Life to the Helsinki Accords*, which was launched by the European Network for East-West Dialogue (see *THE ACTIVIST*, Summer 1987).

Work on the Helsinki memorandum lasted nearly a year with the participation of groups and individuals of more than a dozen countries in East and West. Eastern European signatories include leading independent peace and human rights activists from Hungary, Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia, as well as the independent Moscow Trust Group in the USSR.

By basing its policies on positions taken by the leading human rights activists in Eastern Europe, the NDP could

effectively refute accusations that its policies were "soft" on "communism". It would be putting forward for the Canadian people what Jan Kavan, a voice in the West for Czechoslovakia's Charter 77 human rights organization, has called a "democratic peace" -- the only sane alternative to the absurdities of "peace in a concentration camp" and "human rights in a nuclear winter".

At the outset, an NDP government should move to implement the Helsinki memorandum. It should make a commitment to work for the removal of important political, economic and military issues from the ordinary process of democratic decision making. As a first step to such a democratization of the foreign policy decision

making process, the NDP should repudiate secret agreements involving Canadian participation in nuclear weapons delivery systems. Legislation should be introduced requiring parliamentary approval of all international treaties and defence agreements. An NDP government should also introduce Freedom of Information legislation to prevent secret military agreements in the future.

In explaining its policies for withdrawal from NATO, the NDP should stress that these policies are supported by the Helsinki memorandum. This calls for "a complete withdrawal of all foreign weapons and troops from all European countries" and subsequent democratization of Eastern Europe. The statement

also gives the best rebuttal of the spurious argument that peace is best served by Canada playing a reforming role within NATO. It notes that the neutral and non-aligned countries "can play a vital role in helping Europe to escape from bipolarity [i.e. bloc confrontation]". Historically, it has been the initiatives of the non-aligned countries that have "substantially promoted" the CSCE process, not the policies of the NATO bloc.

In putting forward a visionary non-aligned foreign policy, the NDP has a historic opportunity to make a major contribution to the global development of freedom and peace. It should take these views to the Canadian public with vigour, to secure a mandate to work for a democratic peace.

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Some credits were inadvertently omitted from the last issue of *The ACTIVIST*. In the article "Yes To Peace", the section on the environmental impact of uranium mining was based on *Wollaston: The Struggle for Survival*, a new publication from Black Rose Books, and the section on tritium was taken from a leaflet produced by a number of Ontario peace groups. The article "Nuclear Resistance 1987" is taken from a press release by *The Nuclear Resister*.

We apologize to the groups concerned.

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The *ACTIVIST* is the newspaper of the ACT for Disarmament Coalition. Its purpose is to:

- 1) to present the views of ACT;
- 2) to provide a forum for debate within the peace movement;
- 3) to act as a source of information on events and campaigns which are of importance to the peace movement.

Signed articles do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the ACT Coalition or the editorial collective. Contributions of articles and photos are always welcome. All articles may be reprinted without permission.

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Children of Solidarity

The struggle for peace, for a real conscientious objector status, against pollution and nuclear reactors: these are the main objectives of the Polish movement *Wolność i Pokój* (WIP - Freedom and Peace).

WIP was founded on April 14, 1985 in Cracow. The same year, local committees were set up in Warsaw, Gdansk, Szczecin, Wrocław and Cracow. Today most cities in Poland have a group. It's not easy to put a number to its membership, because the organization is quite informal. Many young people join for a single action, when they feel especially concerned about a subject. Many others express their support for the group without actually joining it, because WIP is considered as basically a youth movement.

The appearances of WIP are often spectacular, and they are certainly inspired by the actions of Greenpeace: to protest against the construction of the first Polish nuclear power station, a few members of WIP climbed a building in Gdansk and attached a banner. Anti-nuclear activists weren't the only ones to oppose this

reactor station, many people with no definite opinion on nuclear power were shocked by the chosen site: Zarnowice is to be built next to the cities of Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot, which together have one million inhabitants.

Last December, 13 members of WIP fasted for two weeks in Warsaw along with others in Bydgoszcz and some other cities to demand the freedom of all conscientious objectors in Polish prisons [see statement below]. The fight for a recognized conscientious objector status is not only the issue which WIP first demonstrated about, but also one of the central themes of the contacts WIP has established with other independent peace movements in both Eastern and Western Europe. Remember also that in May of last year WIP organized an international peace meeting in Warsaw.

Poland suffers from terrible industrial pollution which has made the forests sick and the Baltic Sea resemble a giant garbage can. This is the fruit of decades of industrial development without the slightest consideration for the

consequences on nature and on human beings. WIP organizes protest actions against the factories which are the worst polluters and denounces ecological scandals.

The echo which meets the concerns of WIP translates into a change of attitude on the part of many Poles towards questions of peace and ecology. A few years ago, it was almost impossible to discuss peace in Poland, even with Solidarity activists, the term was so debased by official propaganda. Today the feeling that peace is, in the East, an element of government propaganda and, in the West, a preoccupation of idealists ignorant of the freedoms which they enjoy, is probably widespread. Nevertheless, more and more people are ready to admit the absurdity of the arms race. The politics of Gorbachev are followed with more scepticism, but not without a certain hope.

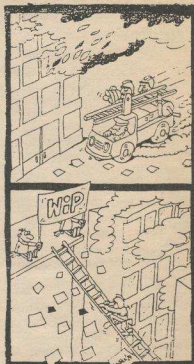
The Chernobyl catastrophe has also awakened consciences. The unbreathable air and undrinkable water of some industrial centres has been

thought of fatalistically for a long time. But now, more and more Poles understand that it affects their survival.

The leaders of Solidarity have called WIP "the children of Solidarity". At a time when Solidarity is concentrating on more specifically union concerns, the members of WIP represent not only a new generation of activism, but also an independent social movement which is becoming more and more important.

By Annie Dupre

This article has been reprinted from *Dissidences*, the magazine of the Geneva Peace Committee in Switzerland.



Many young people refuse to fulfil their military service for religious, moral, political or anarchist reasons.

Presently these 11 conscientious objectors are imprisoned in Poland:

Mariusz Bajda - Szczecin
Piotr Bednarz - Gdynia
Jack Borcz - Kolobrzeg
Marek Czachor - Gdynia
Sławomir Dutkiewicz - Bydgoszcz
Oskar Kasperek - Katowice
Wojciech Nidkinski - Przasnysz
Piotr Rozycki - Bydgoszcz
Wiesław Soliwodzki - Przasnysz
Wojciech Wozniak - Szczecin
Piotr Zdzwinicki - Łódź



What is ACT?

ACT for Disarmament is a non-aligned coalition of activist groups and individuals dedicated to mobilizing Canadians against our country's deepening involvement in the arms race. We began as the Against Cruise Testing coalition in late 1982 and have organized some of the largest demonstrations in Canada. We have since continued to focus on this issue as well as broadening out as Canada's involvement in U.S. military strategy becomes more inextricable.

We believe that peace and ecology are inseparable. Thus we campaign against nuclear power, which fuels the arms race and poisons our environment. We cannot ignore Canada's increasing reliance on this dangerous technology.

As part of the international non-aligned peace movement, we are opposed to the militaristic policies of both superpowers and their military blocs. We believe that peace can only be achieved through the united efforts of people, East and West, working independently of their governments. ACT for Disarmament publicly supports the right of people to work for peace, free from government interference, in both blocs.

ACT strives to reach people in all walks of life. In keeping with our belief that people can bring about change, we concentrate much of our energy on mobilizing people, both by building mass demonstrations and by networking on the local, national and international levels. We believe that sustained, highly public action is the strongest lever we have on government policy and that demonstrations are an effective way of expressing our view in a democratic society.



History of Action

1983

Feb 12: ACT networks demonstrations across Canada and mobilizes 4000 Torontonians 45 hours after the umbrella weapons testing agreement. **April 23:** ACT organizes the historic anti-cruise march of 25,000 in Toronto and networks Canada's largest day of protest to date: about 125,000 in over 20 cities. **July 23:** ACT co-ordinates nationwide (and US!) reaction to the cruise testing agreement - 6000 march up Yonge St in Toronto. **Aug 6:** Hiroshima commemoration and protest. **Oct 22:** ACT co-organizes a march which again brings out 25,000 in Toronto. **Dec 16:** ACT holds a small but significant protest as part of the successful campaign to free independent Soviet peace activist Olga Medvedkova.

1984

March 10: National demonstrations in response to the first cruise test. ACT had finally won the right to march up Yonge St without a permit. **April 28:** ACT's second annual Spring Peace Protest attracts over 10,000 participants. **Aug 6:** ACT's second Hiroshima day march.

1985

Jan: Symbolic action marks the first cruise test. "Saturday after" march - over 500 brave the cold. **Feb 19:** Second cruise test - nearly 2000 people present pictures of their children at a weekday, non-hour protest at PC Party headquarters. **April 27:** 3rd Annual Peace Protest draws over 4000. **Aug 6-9:** ACT's Hiroshima day candlelight march of over 2500 is followed by a 3-day vigil.

1986

Jan-Feb: ACT Niagara & ACT Kitchener-Waterloo join ACT Toronto to protest the cruise tests. **April 26:** 4000, many first-time demonstrators, join ACT Toronto's 4th Spring Peace Protest. **May 11:** ACT K-W's Mother's Day March is the largest peace demonstration ever in Kitchener-Waterloo. **Aug 6-9:** ACT chapters hold actions on the anniversaries of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. **Oct 13-19:** ACT's historic East-West peace festival brings together independent peace, ecology, labour & feminist activists from both sides in the Cold War.

1987

Feb: ACT chapters in Hamilton, Ancaster, K-W, Peterborough, St Catharines & Toronto protest continued cruise testing. **April 25:** A youthful crowd of 3000 is out for ACT Toronto's 5th Annual Peace Protest. **July-Aug:** ACT Vancouver holds protests against US warship visits. **Aug 6-9:** Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemorations.

1988

Jan-Feb: All 8 ACT chapters hold anti-cruise protests in the wake of the INF agreement. Protests are also held in Europe and the US. **April 25:** ACT Toronto's 6th Spring Protest: 1500 protest in the rain.